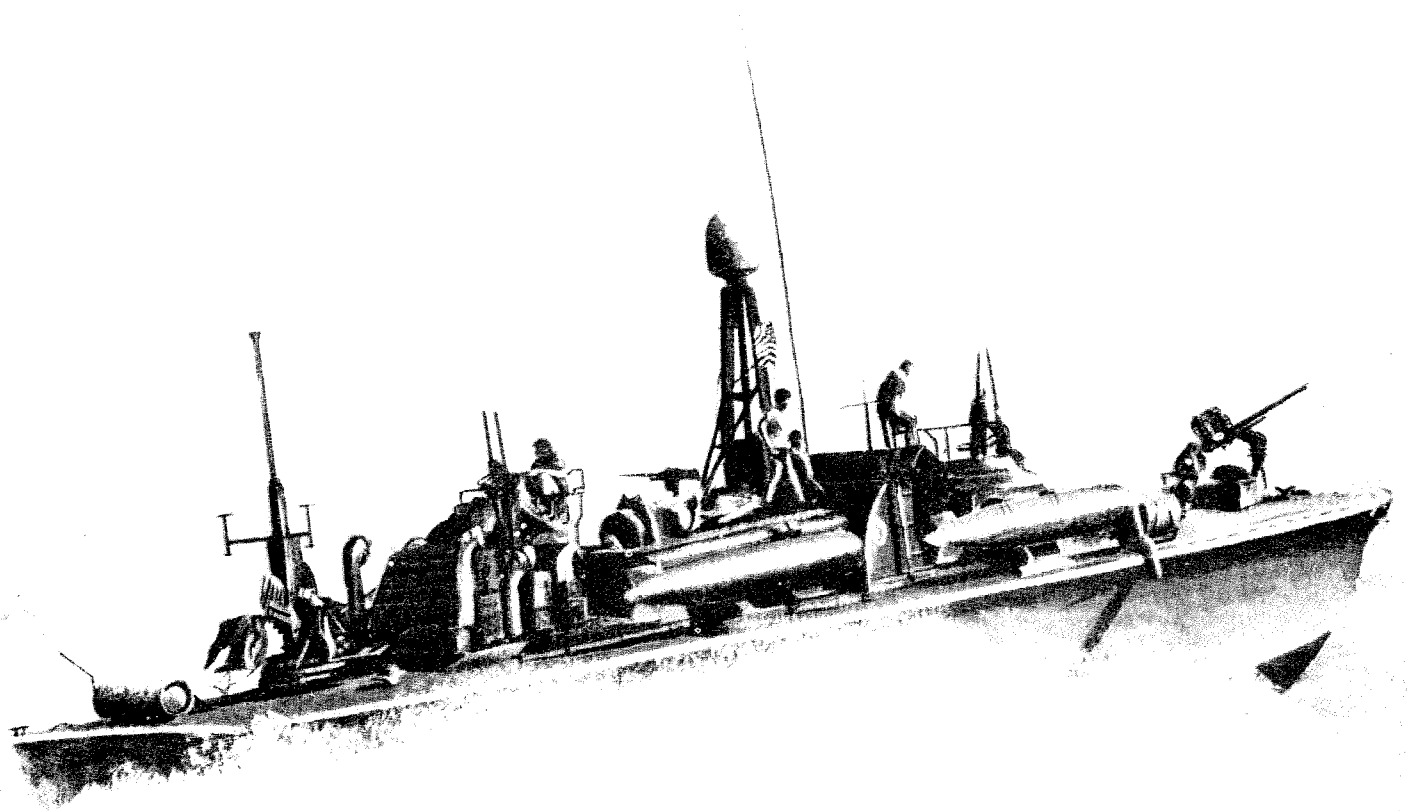


An Abridged U.S. Naval Chronology of WORLD WAR II



REVIEWED AND APPROVED

9 September 1981

(DATE)

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Navy Department

ABRIDGED U. S. NAVAL CHRONOLOGY, WORLD WAR II

(Condensed from: U. S. Naval History Division, United States Naval Chronology, World War II. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1955. 214 pp.)

1941

December

7 - Japanese carrier-based horizontal bombers, dive bombers, torpedo bombers, and fighters totaling 360 aircraft from Naval Striking Force (VADM Negumo) heavily attack ships of the U. S. Pacific Fleet and military installations at Pearl Harbor and other places on Oahu, T. H. Four battleships, 1 minelayer, and 1 target ship are sunk; 4 battleships, 3 cruisers, 3 destroyers, 1 seaplane tender, and 1 repair ship are damaged. Navy Yard and Naval Base, Pearl Harbor; Naval Air Station, Ford Island; Naval Patrol Plane Station, Kaneohe; Marine Corps airfield, Ewa; Army airfields, Hickam, Wheeler and Bellows are damaged; 188 Naval and Army aircraft are destroyed. Killed or missing: Navy, 2,004; Marine Corps, 108, Army 222. Japanese lose 5 midget submarines, 28 aircraft, and fewer than 100 men.

Midway Island is bombarded by two Japanese destroyers. President orders mobilization.

Japanese declaration of war reaches Washington, D. C.

8 - U. S. declares war on Japan.

Striking Force, Asiatic Fleet (RADM W. A. Glassford) departs Iloilo, P. I., for Makassar Strait, Netherlands East Indies. Japanese aircraft in widely scattered operations bomb Guam, Wake, Hong Kong, Singapore and the Philippine Islands.

11 - Germany and Italy declare war on the U. S.

U. S. declares war on Germany and Italy.

23 - Wake Island, which had been subjected to prolonged enemy bombings, surrenders to Japanese invasion force. U. S. Relief Expedition is recalled while still 425 miles from Wake.

25 - British surrender Hong Kong.

29 - Corregidor, P. I., is bombed for first time by Japanese aircraft.

1942

January

11 - Japanese begin invasion of Netherlands East Indies by landings at Tarakan and Jesselton, Borneo; Menado and Kema, Celebes.

Japan declares war on the Netherlands.

January (Cont'd)

- 16 - Japanese invade Burma from Thailand.
- 18 - Germany, Italy and Japan sign new military pact in Berlin.
- 24 - Battle of Balikpapan (Battle of Makassar Strait): Japanese Borneo invasion convoy undergoes night torpedo attack off Balikpapan, Borneo, by destroyer division (CDR P. H. Talbot) composed of PARROTT, POPE, JOHN D. FORD and PAUL JONES; four enemy transports and a patrol craft are sunk.

February

- 1 - Two carrier task forces (VADM W. F. Halsey and RADM F. J. Fletcher) and a bombardment group (RADM R. A. Spruance), totaling 2 aircraft carriers, 5 cruisers, and 10 destroyers, attack Kwajalein, Wotje, Maloelap, Jaluit, and Mili in the Marshall Islands, and Makin, Gilbert Islands.
- 4 - Japanese aircraft bomb allied force (RADM K. W. F. M. Doorman, Royal Netherlands Navy) of 4 cruisers and accompanying destroyers attempting transit of Madoera Strait to attack Japanese Borneo invasion fleet; 2 U. S. cruisers and 1 Netherlands cruiser are damaged.
- 15 - Singapore surrenders to the Japanese.
- Japanese forces land on Sumatra, Netherlands East Indies.
- 19 - Bali, Netherlands East Indies, is invaded by the Japanese. Battle of Badoeng Strait starts at night and continues the next day. Allied naval force (RADM Doorman) of three cruisers and accompanying destroyers attack retiring Japanese Bali occupation force in Badoeng Strait. One Netherlands destroyer is sunk; 2 Netherlands cruisers and 1 U. S. destroyer are damaged. One Japanese destroyer is damaged.
- 27 - Battle of Java Sea is fought as Allied naval forces (RADM Doorman) of 5 cruisers and 11 destroyers in Java Sea near Surabaya attack enemy force covering Java invasion convoy. Two Netherlands cruisers, 2 British destroyers, 1 Netherlands destroyer are sunk; 1 U. S. cruiser and 1 British cruiser are damaged.

March

- 1 - Battle of Sunda Strait which commenced shortly before midnight, 28 February 1942, continues. After the Battle of the Java Sea, Allied vessels heading for Sunda Strait are attacked by superior Japanese surface forces. One U. S. cruiser (HOUSTON), 1 Australian cruiser, and 1 Netherlands destroyer are sunk. Four Japanese transports are lost.

March (Cont'd)

17 - United States, in agreement with Allied governments, assumes responsibility for the strategic defense of entire Pacific Ocean.

April

18 - VADM Halsey in carrier HORNET launches 16 Army B-25's (LTCOL J. H. Doolittle) at point over 650 miles east of Honshu, Japan; bombers hit Tokoyo, Yokosuka, Yokohama, Kobe and Nagoya, Japan.

May

- 2 - Japanese land on Florida Island, Solomon Islands.
- 4 - Battle of the Coral Sea commences with an air strike on Tulagi, Solomon Islands, by U. S. carrier-based aircraft. Allied naval forces (RADM Fletcher) comprise Attack Group (RADM T. C. Kincaid) of 5 U. S. cruisers and 5 U. S. destroyers; Support Group (RADM J. G. Crace, RN) with 1 U. S. cruiser, 2 Australian cruisers and 2 U. S. destroyers; Carrier Group (RADM A. W. Fitch) consisting of 2 U. S. carriers and 4 U. S. destroyers; and Fueling Group (CAPT J. S. Phillips) including 2 U. S. oilers and 2 U. S. destroyers.
- 5- RADM Fletcher's Allied force, after fueling, changes course to intercept Japanese Port Moresby Invasion Group (Battle of the Coral Sea).
- 6 - Corregidor and Manila Bay forts, P. I., surrender to Japanese.
- 7 - RADM Fletcher's Allied force turns north to engage Japanese Attack Group. Support Group (RADM Crace) is detached to intercept enemy Port Moresby Invasion Group. RADM Crace's ships are attacked by enemy torpedo bombers and land-based bombers and, mistaken for Japanese Port Moresby Invasion Force, are bombed by Army B-26 aircraft. Carrier aircraft attack Japanese Support Group and sink aircraft carrier SHOHO (Battle of the Coral Sea).
- 8 - Carrier LEXINGTON search aircraft sight Japanese carriers SHOKAKU and ZUIKAKU. RADM Fletcher's carrier aircraft damage SHOKAKU and force her retirement. At the same time, Japanese aircraft hit carriers YORKTOWN and LEXINGTON, damaging the latter to such an extent that PHELPS is ordered to sink her. (Battle of the Coral Sea).

June

4 - Battle of Midway (4-6 June) opens as aircraft from four Japanese carriers strike Midway Island installations, which are defended by Marine and Army aircraft.

June

4 - (Cont'd) - Carrier task forces (RADMs Fletcher and Spruance) launch aircraft from carriers ENTERPRISE, HORNET and YORKTOWN which hit four Japanese carriers. YORKTOWN is disabled by Japanese carrier aircraft. ADM Yamamoto abandons Midway invasion plans and retires westward. Japanese carrier KAGA is sunk by carrier-based aircraft and carrier SORYU by carrier-based aircraft and submarine NAUTILUS (Battle of Midway).

5 - Carrier task force (RADM Spruance) pursues Japanese fleet westward (Battle of Midway). Japanese carriers AKAGI and HIRYU are damaged by carrier-based aircraft and sunk by own forces.

6 - Aircraft from carriers ENTERPRISE and HORNET attack Japanese force retiring from Midway. After recovering aircraft, U. S. force changes course eastward to refuel and breaks contact with the enemy (Battle of Midway). U. S. destroyer HAMMANN is sunk by submarine torpedo and Japanese heavy cruiser MIKUMA is sunk by naval carrier-based aircraft and Marine land-based aircraft (Battle of Midway).

7 - U. S. carrier YORKTOWN is sunk by Japanese submarine torpedo as she retires, damaged, after Battle of Midway.

25 - President and British Prime Minister conclude conference in Washington; decision is reached for combined U. S. - British research and development of the atomic bomb.

26 - Germany announces unrestricted submarine warfare off United States Atlantic Coast.

July

30 - Women's Naval Reserve (WAVES) is established.

August

7 - Marines land on Florida, Tulagi, Gavutu, Tanambogo and Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands, in the first American land offensive of the war. Under cover of naval surface and air forces (VADM Fletcher), the 1st Marine Division (MAJGEN Vandegrift) is put ashore by Amphibious Force, South Pacific (RADM R. K. Turner). The landings are supported by carrier and shore-based aircraft (RADM L. Noyes and RADM J. S. McCain). The overall commander is VADM R. L. Ghormley and the officer in tactical command is VADM Fletcher.

August

8 - Marines win control of Tulagi, Gavutu and Tanambogo, Solomon Islands.

August

- 8 - (Cont'd) - An unfinished enemy airstrip on Guadalcanal is captured and renamed Henderson Field.
- 9 - Battle of Savo Island commences in the darkness as a Japanese force of 7 cruisers and 1 destroyer approaches west of Savo Island, undetected. The enemy sinks 4 Allied cruisers (including U. S. cruisers ASTORIA, QUINCY and VINCENNES) and damages 1 other cruiser (CHICAGO) and 2 destroyers (RALPH TALBOT and PATTERSON) by torpedo and gunfire before retiring.
- 10 - Japanese heavy cruiser KAKO sunk by submarine S-44 near Kavieng, New Ireland.
- 24 - Battle of the Eastern Solomons begins and continues into the next day. Naval carrier-based aircraft (VADM Fletcher) supported by Marine and Army aircraft turn back major Japanese attempt to recapture Guadalcanal and Tulagi, Solomon Islands. U. S. carrier ENTERPRISE is damaged by Japanese dive bomber and Japanese carrier RYUJO is sunk by carrier-based aircraft (Battle of the Eastern Solomons).

September

- 12 - German aircraft and submarines launch sustained 10-day attack against large Allied convoy to northern Russia.
- 15 - Carrier task force (RADM Noyes) covering transport of reinforcements from Espiritu Santo, New Hebrides, to Guadalcanal is attacked by 2 Japanese submarines which sink 1 aircraft carrier (WASP) and damage a battleship (NORTH CAROLINA) and a destroyer (O'BRIEN).
- Japanese battleships bombard Guadalcanal.
- 24 - Japanese land on Gilbert Islands.

October

- 11 - Battle of Cape Esperance commences at night and continues on 12 October. Surface forces (RADM N. Scott) attack enemy cruisers and destroyers headed for Guadalcanal on the "Tokyo Express." Two U. S. cruisers (SALT LAKE CITY and BOISE) are damaged. One Japanese destroyer (FUBUKO) is sunk; two cruisers and one destroyer are damaged.
- 12 - Japanese cruiser FURUTAKA sunk off Savo Island.
- 16 - Carrier task force (RADM Murray) strikes Japanese troops on Guadalcanal and enemy seaplanes at Rekata Bay, Solomon Islands.
- 22 - Westinghouse Electric & Manufacturing Company, by amendment to a design study contact, was authorized to construct two 19A axial flow turbojet power plants. Thereby, fabrication was initiated on the first jet engine of wholly American design.

October (Cont'd)

- 25 - Japanese light cruiser YURA damaged by Naval, Marine and Army aircraft, off Santa Isabel, sunk by own forces.
- 26 - Battle of Santa Cruz Islands is joined as carrier task forces (RADMS Kinkaid and Murray) close a numerically superior Japanese force; heavy damage is inflicted on U. S. forces but immediate Japanese movement toward Guadalcanal is checked.
- 27 - U. S. carrier HORNET is sunk by dive bombers, torpedo bombers and destroyer torpedoes.

November

- 8 - North Africa is invaded. Allied Expeditionary Force under the supreme command of LTGEN Dwight Eisenhower lands at Casablanca, Oran and Algiers. Allied Naval Force (ADM Sir Andrew Cunningham, RN) is composed of three principal parts: Western Naval Task Force (RADM H. K. Hewitt) lands troops (MAJGEN G. S. Patton) near Casablanca; Center Naval Task Force (COMMO T. Troubridge, RN) lands troops (MAJGEN L. R. Fredendall) at Oran; Eastern Naval Task Force (RADM Sir H. M. Burrough, RN) puts troops (MAJGEN Ryder) ashore at Algiers. U. S. battleship MASSACHUSETTS, heavy cruiser WICHITA, light cruiser BROOKLYN and 2 destroyers are damaged by gunfire from coastal defense guns, North African landings.
- 10 - U. S. Naval vessels and carrier aircraft engage French naval forces at Casablanca, Morocco. Oran, Algeria, surrenders to U. S. forces.
- 11 - Casablanca surrenders to U. S. forces. Allied-French armistice is signed. German troops occupy France, south to Mediterranean Sea. Italian troops land on Corsica and move into France.
- 12 - Naval Battle of Guadalcanal (12-15 Nov.) opens as transports, under the protection of air and surface forces, are attacked by Japanese aircraft.
- 13 - Landing Support Group (RADM D. J. Callaghan) encounters Japanese Raiding Group, including two battleships, steaming to bombard Henderson Field; a devastating Naval action ensues in the darkness off Guadalcanal. Heavy damage is inflicted on U. S. force. (RADM Kinkaid) Carrier Force launches air search and attacks against the enemy (Naval Battle of Guadalcanal). Two U. S. light cruisers (ATLANTA and JUNEAU) and 3 destroyers are sunk. Japanese battleship HIEI and 2 destroyers are sunk by U. S. Naval gunfire.

November

- 14 - Japanese cruisers and destroyers engaged in night bombardment of Henderson Field are attacked by motor torpedo boats. In the morning this enemy force, while retiring, is struck by Marine and Naval aircraft from Henderson Field and carrier ENTERPRISE.

November

14 - (Cont'd) - The same aircraft sink 7 Japanese transports during the afternoon. Beginning shortly before midnight and continuing on 15 November, battleship force (RADM W. A. Lee) composed of 2 battleships and 3 destroyers engages and turns back large Japanese naval group (Naval Battle of Guadalcanal, 12-15 Nov.). Two U. S. destroyers (PRESTON and WALKE) are sunk. Japanese heavy cruiser KINUGASA sunk by Naval and Marine aircraft.

15 - Naval Battle of Guadalcanal ends. Although the U. S. suffered greater loss in warships, the Japanese withdrew and never again sent large naval forces into the waters around Guadalcanal; the ultimate outcome of the struggle for that island was decided. One U. S. Navy destroyer (BENHAM) was sunk. Japanese battleship KIRISHIMA and destroyer AYANAMI were sunk by naval gunfire.

27 - French Fleet at Toulon is scuttled.

30 - Battle of Tassafaronga occurs at night when cruiser and destroyer force (RADM C. H. Wright) engages Japanese destroyers (RADM Tanaka) off Tassafaronga Point, Guadalcanal; enemy torpedoes do heavy damage. U. S. Navy cruisers PENSACOLA, NORTHAMPTON, NEW ORLEANS and MINNEAPOLIS damaged by torpedoes from Japanese destroyers. Japanese destroyer TAKANAMI sunk by surface craft.

December

1 - U. S. heavy cruiser NORTHAMPTON is sunk as a result of torpedo damage received at Battle of Tassafaronga.

8 - Motor torpedo boats attack then turn back Japanese destroyers attempting to reinforce Guadalcanal.

9 - Aircraft from Henderson Field, Guadalcanal, begin what become virtually daily attacks on Japanese installations at Munda Point, Solomon Islands.

18 - Japanese light cruiser TENRYU sunk by submarine ALBACORE, Bismarck Sea.

1943

January

5 - Cruiser and destroyer group (RADM Ainsworth) heavily bombards airfield and enemy installations at Munda, Solomon Islands.

23 - Casablanca Conference, in session since 14 January, ends. President, British Prime Minister, and Combined Chiefs of Staff reach decisions on invasion of Sicily and cross-channel amphibious assault on Western Europe.

24 - Bombardment group of cruisers and destroyers (RADM Ainsworth) and carrier group (RADM D. C. Ramsey) bombard and bomb Vila-Stanmore area, Kolombangara, Solomon Islands.

January (Cont'd)

- 26 - Submarine WAHOO sinks entire group of 4 Japanese ships north of New Guinea; 2 freighters, 1 transport, and 1 tanker.
- 29 - Battle of Rennell Island commences as cruiser-destroyer task force (RADM R. C. Giffen), covering movements of troop transports to Guadalcanal, is bombed near Rennell Island by Japanese aircraft.
- 30 - Land and carrier-based naval aircraft engage Japanese aircraft attacking RADM Giffen's cruiser and destroyer force (Battle of Rennell Island).
- U. S. heavy cruiser CHICAGO sunk by aircraft torpedo, Battle of Rennell Island.

February

- 9 - Organized Japanese resistance on Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands, ends. The bitter struggle to capture Guadalcanal and other islands in the southern Solomon Islands spanned 6 months and was the initial U. S. offensive move in the Pacific War. It was extremely costly in men, ships and material for both sides.

March

- 2 - Battle of the Bismarck Sea (2-5 March) opens as U. S. Army and Australian aircraft bomb 8 Japanese transports escorted by 8 destroyers in Bismarck Sea in route to Lae, New Guinea. Aircraft and motor torpedo boat attacks continue until all transports and 4 destroyers are sunk.
- 5 - Escort carrier BOGUE commences escort of convoy duty; this is first time an escort carrier is assigned anti-submarine operations as primary duty.
- 6 - Three cruisers and seven destroyers (RADM A. S. Merrill) bombard Vila and Munda, Solomon Islands; two Japanese destroyers are engaged and sunk.
- 15 - Commander-in-Chief, U. S. Fleet (ADM E. J. King) establishes numbered fleet system; all fleets in the Pacific have odd numbers and those in the Atlantic even numbers.
- 26 - Battle of the Komandorski Islands is fought between a task group comprised of 2 cruisers and 4 destroyers (RADM C. H. McMorris) and a Japanese force of 4 cruisers and 4 destroyers escorting reinforcements to Attu, Aleutian Islands. In this daylight ship action, 1 U. S. cruiser (SALT LAKE CITY) and 1 destroyer (BAILEY) are damaged. One enemy cruiser is damaged. Japanese reinforcements fail to reach Attu.

April

- 18 - ADM Yamamoto, Commander-in-Chief, Japanese Combined Fleet, is killed when his aircraft is shot down by Army aircraft.

April (Cont'd)

21 - ADM Koga is appointed Commander-in-Chief, Japanese Combined Fleet.

May

13 - Enemy resistance in North Africa ends.
30 - Organized Japanese resistance ends on Attu, Aleutian Islands.

June

16 - Japanese aircraft attack ships at Guadalcanal; large number of enemy aircraft are shot down.
30 - Beginning shortly before midnight on 29 June, 4 cruisers and 4 destroyers (RADM Merrill) bombard Vila-Stanmore on Kolombangara and Buin-Shortland, Bougainville, Solomon Islands; mines are laid off Shortland Harbor, Bougainville. Third Fleet Amphibious Force (RADM Turner) supported by land-based aircraft (VADM A. W. Fitch) lands Marines and Army troops on Rendova and other islands in the New Georgia area, Solomon Islands.

July

6 - Battle of Kula Gulf is fought in the darkness as a task group consisting of 3 cruisers and 4 destroyers (RADM Ainsworth) engages 10 Japanese destroyers carrying troops and supplies to Kolombangara, Solomon Islands. One U. S. light cruiser (HELENA) and two Japanese destroyers are sunk.
10 - Allies invade Sicily. Troops land under cover of naval gunfire and aircraft. The overall commander is GEN Eisenhower; naval commander is Admiral of the Fleet Sir Andrew Cunningham, RN.
11 - U. S. cruiser and destroyer gunfire stops German tank attack on landing beaches near Gela, Sicily.
13 - Battle of Kolombangara is fought in the darkness off Kolombangara, Solomon Islands, as a task force, consisting of 3 cruisers and 10 destroyers (RADM Ainsworth), engages 1 Japanese cruiser and 5 destroyers escorting destroyer transports. One U. S. destroyer (GWIN) is sunk; two U. S. cruisers, one New Zealand cruiser and two U. S. destroyers are damaged. One Japanese cruiser (JINTSU) is sunk.
18 - Naval airship K-74 is shot down by a German submarine in the Florida Straits; this is the only airship lost to enemy action.
28 - Japanese complete evacuation of Kiska, Aleutian Islands, without detection by U. S. forces.

August

2 - Naval task groups consisting of 2 battleships, 5 cruisers and 9 destroyers (RADMS Kingman and Baker) bombard Kiska, Aleutian Islands. Kiska is bombarded 10 times between this date and 15 August.

U. S. motor torpedo boat PT-109 (commanded by LTJG Jack Kennedy) rammed by Japanese destroyer, shearing off the starboard side of the boat aft, including the starboard engine.

5 - Munda, New Georgia, Solomon Islands, falls to Army forces.

6 - Battle of Vella Gulf is joined shortly before midnight and continues through the opening minutes of 7 August. Four Japanese destroyers attempting to bring troops and supplies to Kolombangara are attacked by six destroyers (CDR F. Moosbrugger) in Vella Gulf.

Three Japanese destroyers are sunk and one is damaged.

U. S. force suffers no damage.

17 - Army troops enter Messina terminating the campaign in Sicily. Lipari and Stromboli Islands, north of Sicily, surrender to U. S. destroyer and PT boats.

24 - New Georgia, Solomon Islands, campaign ends as Army troops occupy Bairoko Harbor.

September

3 - British troops, with naval and air support, land on the Italian mainland.

Allies sign armistice with Italy.

9 - Italian mainland is invaded in force. Under protection of the Western Naval Task Force (VADM H. K. Hewitt), the Allied Fifth Army lands on the assault beaches in the Gulf of Salerno.

11 - Italian Fleet surrenders to the Allies.

October

3 - Japanese complete evacuation of Kolombangara, Solomon Islands.

5 - Task Force including 6 carriers, 7 cruisers and 24 destroyers (RADM Montgomery) bombs and bombards Wake Island; attack is repeated on 6 October.

6 - Battle of Vella Lavella takes place at night when 3 destroyers (CAPT F. R. Walker) intercept and attack 9 Japanese destroyers evacuating troops from Vella Lavella, Solomon Islands.

7 - Japanese complete evacuation of Vella Lavella.

13 - Italy declares war on Germany.

27 - Troops land on Mono and Stirling Islands in the Treasury Island Group, Solomon Islands; pre-invasion bombardment and covering for the landings are provided by U. S. Naval vessels and aircraft.

November

- 2 - Battle of Empress Augusta Bay is fought during darkness as task force comprised of 4 light cruisers and 8 destroyers (RADM Merrill) intercepts Japanese force of 2 heavy and 2 light cruisers and 6 destroyers steaming to attack transports at Empress Augusta Bay, Bougainville, Solomon Islands. Two U. S. light cruisers and 3 destroyers are damaged. Japanese force is turned back.
- 13 - Carrier and land-based aircraft begin daily bombings of Japanese positions in the Gilbert and Marshall Islands. Cruiser and destroyer task force (RADM Merrill) is attacked by Japanese aircraft off Empress Augusta Bay. One U. S. light cruiser (DENVER) is damaged.
- 20 - Naval, Marine and Army forces land on Tarawa and Makin, Gilbert Islands. The operation is under the overall command of Commander Central Pacific Force (VADM R. A. Spruance). Bitter resistance is encountered on Tarawa. One U. S. battleship (MISSISSIPPI), one light carrier (INDEPENDENCE) and two destroyers (RINGGOLD and DASHIELL) are damaged.
- 21 - Marine reconnaissance company lands on Abemama, Gilbert Islands, from submarine NAUTILUS.
- 23 - Betio, Tarawa Atoll and Makin in the Gilbert Islands are declared secured.
- 24 - U. S. escort carrier LISCOME BAY sunk by submarine torpedo, Gilbert Islands area.
- 25 - Battle of Cape St. George is fought during the early hours as a squadron of 5 destroyers (CAPT A. A. Burke) intercepts 5 Japanese destroyers off Cape St. George, New Ireland. Three enemy Japanese destroyers are sunk and one damaged. U. S. ships suffer no damage.

December

- 4 - Aircraft from task force which includes six carriers (RADM C. A. Pownall) bomb Kwajalein and Wotje Atolls, Marshall Islands. U. S. carrier LEXINGTON, light cruiser MOBILE and destroyer TAYLOR are damaged. Japanese escort carrier CHUYO sunk by submarine SAILFISH southeast of Honshu, Japan.

1944

January

- 22 - Combined U. S. - British Army force under the Command of MAJGEN J. P. Lucas, USA, lands at Anzio-Nettuno area, Italy; the naval commander is RADM F. J. Lowry, USN. Naval gunfire continues to support the troops ashore during the 3-month struggle for the beachhead.
- 29 - Aircraft from fast carrier force (RADM M. A. Mitscher) begin series of strikes to destroy Japanese air power and shipping in the Marshall Islands. Attacks continue daily until 6 February 1944.

January (Cont'd)

31 - Marines and Army troops (MAJGEN H. M. Smith, USMC) land on Kwajalein and Majuro Atolls in the Marshall Islands. The operation is under the overall command of Commander Central Pacific Force (VADM Spruance). Aircraft from fast carrier group (RADM F. C. Sherman) bomb aircraft and airfield facilities at Engebi Island, Eniwetok Atoll in the Marshall Islands. Attacks by this carrier group continue on the first three days of February and afterward by RADM S. P. Ginder's carrier group through 7 February.

February

1 - Invasion of the Marshall Islands continues as Marines land on Roi and Namur Islands, and Army troops land on Kwajalein Island under cover of heavy naval gunfire from battleships, cruisers and destroyers.
2 - Roi and Namur Islands are secured.
3 - Cruiser and destroyer gunfire supports landing of Army troops on Ebeye, Kwajalein Atoll, Marshall Islands.
7 - Kwajalein Atoll is declared secured.
16 - Japanese light cruiser AGANO sunk by submarine SKATE.
17 - Naval task force (VADM Spruance), which includes 9 carriers and 6 battleships, strikes Japanese installations and vessels at Truk, Caroline Islands; attack is repeated on 18 February. One U. S. carrier (INTREPID) is damaged. Japanese light cruiser NAKA, training cruiser KATORI, and three destroyers (MAIKAZE, OITE and TACHIKAZE) are sunk.
18 - Marines and Army forces land on Engebi Island, Eniwetok Atoll. Preliminary landings were made 17 Feb. on several nearby islets. The operation is under the command of RADM H. W. Hill and is supported by naval gunfire and carrier-based aircraft.
19 - Marines and Army troops supported by naval bombardment land on Eniwetok Island, Eniwetok Atoll, Marshall Islands.
23 - Aircraft from fast carrier task force (RADM Mitscher) bomb Saipan, Tinian, Rota and Guam, in first strike against the Marianas Islands.

March

13 - Japanese light cruiser TATSUTA sunk by submarine SAND-LANCE, off Honshu, Japan.
18 - Task group including 1 carrier, 2 battleships and destroyers bombs and bombards Japanese installations on Mili Island in the Marshall Islands. U. S. battleship IOWA damaged by coastal defense gun.

March (Cont'd)

30 - Fast carrier forces under Commander Fifth Fleet (ADM Spruance) commence intensive bombing of Japanese airfields, shipping, fleet servicing facilities, and other installations at Palau, Yap, Ulithi, and Woleai in the Caroline Islands.

April

19 - Allied naval force (ADM J. S. Somerville, RN), including U. S. carrier SARATOGA and 3 U. S. destroyers, strikes enemy positions at Sabang, Netherlands East Indies.

27 - Japanese light cruiser YUBARI sunk by submarine BLUEGILL, southwest of Palau Islands.

29 - Aircraft from fast carrier task force (VADM Mitscher), including 12 carriers, commence 2-day bombing attack on Japanese shipping, oil and ammunition dumps, aircraft facilities, and other installations at Truk, Caroline Islands.

May

5 - Admiral S. Toyoda's appointment as Commander-in-Chief of Japanese Combined Fleet is announced; he succeeds ADM Koga, killed in an airplane crash on 31 March 1944.

13 - Naval land-based and Army aircraft stage heavy bombing attacks on Japanese installations on Jaluit Atoll, Marshall Islands; attack continues on 14 May.

29 - U. S. escort carrier BLOCK ISLAND sunk by submarine torpedo, northwest of Canary Islands.

31 - Japanese frigate ISHIGAKI sunk by submarine HERRING, North Pacific.

June

2 - Japanese frigate AWAJI sunk by submarine GUITARRO, off Formosa.

6 - Allied Expeditionary Force under the supreme command of GEN Eisenhower invades Western Europe. Landings are made on the beaches of Normandy, France, following pre-invasion mine-sweeping and bombardment by Allied warships, and under cover of Allied aircraft and naval gunfire. Naval gunfire support groups commanded by RADMs C. F. Bryant and M. L. Deyo effectively prevent the Germans from moving up reinforcements and cover the troops advancing inland.

8 - Beginning shortly before midnight and continuing on 9 June, an Allied naval force (RADM V. A. C. Crutchley, RN), including 2 U. S. light cruisers and destroyers, intercepts and turns back 5 Japanese destroyers attempting to reinforce Baik Island, in the Schouten Islands off New Guinea.

12 - Aircraft from 15 carriers of fast carrier task force (VADM Mitscher) bomb enemy air facilities and coast defenses on Saipan, Tinian, Guam, Rota and Pagan Islands in the Marianas.

June

12 - (Cont'd) - Two Japanese convoys are attacked and damaged. Carrier aircraft continue strikes in the Marianas Islands on 13 and 14 June.

14 - Two task groups of battleships, cruisers and destroyers bombard Japanese installations on Saipan and Tinian, Marianas Islands. U. S. battleship CALIFORNIA is damaged by coastal defense gun.

15 - Carrier-based aircraft from two task groups (RADMs J. J. Clark and W. K. Harrill) bomb Japanese installations on Iwo Jima, Volcano Islands, and Chichi Jima and Haha Jima in the Bonin Islands; attack on Iwo Jima is repeated 16 June. U. S. battleship TENNESSEE damaged by coastal defense gun, Saipan.

19 - Battle of the Philippine Sea (19-20 June) opens as Japanese carrier-based aircraft attack Fifth Fleet covering Saipan operation. Two U. S. battleships (SOUTH DAKOTA and INDIANA), two carriers (BUNKER HILL and WASP) and a heavy cruiser (MINNEAPOLIS) are damaged. Japanese lose over 300 aircraft, and two aircraft carriers (SHOKAKU and TAIHO) are sunk by U. S. submarines.

20 - Battle of the Philippine Sea continues. Aircraft from Fifth Fleet carrier task force (VADM Mitscher) strike Japanese fleet. One enemy carrier (HIYO) is sunk. In the 2-day Battle of the Philippine Sea, the engaged Japanese fleet loses 395 (92%) of its carrier planes, and 31 (72%) of its float planes. Only 35 carrier planes, and 12 float planes remain operational. Besides the losses afloat, an estimated 50 land-based Japanese aircraft from Guam are destroyed. The U. S. Fleet loss is 130 planes and a total of 76 pilots and crewmen for the 2 days. After the battle the Japanese high command thoroughly understood that the war was lost.

22 - U. S. battleship MARYLAND damaged by aircraft torpedo, Marianas.

25 - U. S. battleship, cruiser and destroyer force (RADM Deyo) bombards German shore batteries and coastal defense at Cherbourg, France. U. S. battleship TEXAS is damaged.

July

8 - Cruiser and destroyer task group (RADM C. T. Joy) commences daily gunfire bombardment of enemy defenses on Guam, Marianas; battleships join the bombardment group beginning 14 July.

9 - Organized resistance ceases on Saipan, Marianas Islands.

18 - Premier Tojo and Japanese cabinet resign; General Koiso forms a new cabinet.

21 - Naval attack force (RADM R. L. Conolly) lands Marines and Army forces on Guam. Assault is preceded by intensive naval gunfire.

August

- 1 - Organized Japanese resistance ends on Tinian, Marianas Islands.
- 7 - Japanese light cruiser NAGARA sunk by submarine CROAKER, west of Kyushu, Japan.
- 10 - Organized Japanese resistance ends on Guam.
- 15 - Allied troops land on coast of Southern France between Toulon and Cannes. The assault is preceded by heavy gunfire and aircraft attack. The operation is under the command of VADM K. H. Hewitt. After the landings, naval gunfire engages German coast defense batteries and continues to support the troops ashore.
- 18 - Japanese escort carrier OTAKA sunk by submarine RASHER, off northwestern Luzon, P. I., and light cruiser NATORI by submarine HARDHEAD, east of Samar, P. I.
- 25 - Paris is liberated by U. S. and French troops.
- 31 - Aircraft from carrier task group (RADM R. E. Davison) commence 3-day attack on Iwo Jima and the Bonin Islands. Bombardment by cruisers and destroyers on 1 and 2 September augments air strikes.

September

- 12 - Aircraft from fast carrier task force (VADM Mitscher) commence 3-day attack on Japanese airfields and shipping in the Visayas, P. I. On 14 September, one carrier group (VADM McCain) shifts operations to targets on Mindanao, P. I.
- 21 - Aircraft from 12 carriers (VADM Mitscher) commence 2-day attack against Japanese shipping and airfields on Luzon, P. I.

October

- 10 - Aircraft from fast carrier task force (VADM Mitscher) composed of 17 carriers, escorted by 5 battleships, 14 cruisers, and 58 destroyers bomb Japanese shipping and store facilities on Okinawa and other islands in the Ryukyus.
- 12 - Carrier-based aircraft from Third Fleet commence 5-day attack against enemy shipping, airfield facilities, and industrial plants on Formosa and northern Luzon, P. I. These strikes meet with intensive counterattacks by Japanese aircraft.
- 13 - U. S. carrier FRANKLIN damaged by suicide plane, P. I. area.
- 14 - Carrier HANCOCK and light cruisers HOUSTON and RENO damaged, Formosa area.
- 15 - Carrier FRANKLIN damaged by horizontal bomber, Philippine Islands.
- 18 - Aircraft from three task groups of the Third Fleet (ADM Halsey), including 13 carriers, attack Japanese installations and shipping in northern Luzon and the Manila area, P. I.
- 23 - Battle for Leyte Gulf (23-26 Oct.) opens as U. S. submarines off Palawan Island sight and attack the Center Force of three Japanese naval groups moving on Leyte in a major effort

October

23 - (Cont'd) - to drive U. S. forces from the Philippines. Two enemy cruisers (MAYAI and ATAGO) are sunk.

24 - Battle for Leyte Gulf continues. Carrier-based aircraft (VADM Mitscher) locate and heavily attack the Japanese Center Force south of Mindoro in the Sibuyan Sea, and the Southern Force steaming through the Sulu Sea. Enemy aircraft counterattack U. S. forces; during the night, the U. S. fast carriers move north from San Bernardino Strait to be in a position for dawn strikes against the enemy Northern Force. The Japanese Center Force moves through San Bernardino Strait and south toward Leyte Gulf. U. S. light carrier PRINCETON is sunk. Japanese battleship MUSASHI is sunk by carrier-based aircraft.

25 - Battle for Leyte Gulf continues. Japanese Southern Force enters Surigao Strait where it is engaged by RADM J. B. Oldendorf's force of battleships, cruisers, destroyers and motor torpedo boats and virtually destroyed (Battle of Surigao Strait). Meanwhile, the Japanese Center Force, including 4 battleships and 5 cruisers, having passed into the Philippine Sea during the night, attacks 6 escort carriers and screening vessels commanded by RADM Sprague (Battle off Samar). After inflicting severe damage on this light U. S. force, the enemy Center Force retires without molesting the landing operations in the Leyte Gulf area. At the same time, carrier aircraft from Third Fleet locate and strike the Japanese Northern Force. Four Japanese carriers and other vessels are sunk (Battle off Cape Engano). U. S. naval vessels sunk, Battle for Leyte Gulf: Escort carriers ST LO and GAMBIER BAY; destroyers HOEL and JOHNSTON; destroyer escort SAMUEL B. ROBERTS. Japanese naval vessels sunk: Carrier ZUIKAKU; light carriers CHITOSE, CHIYODA and ZUIHO; battleships FUSO and YAMASHIRO; heavy cruisers CHIKUMA, CHOKAI and SUZUYA; cruisers MOGAMI and TAMA; destroyers ASAGUMO, MICHISHIO, YAMAGUMA and AKIZUKI.

26 - Battle for Leyte Gulf ends as carrier-based and Army aircraft bomb the retiring Japanese ships which survived the previous days' action. Japanese naval vessels sunk: Light cruisers ABUKUMA, KINU, and NOSHIRO; destroyers HAYASHIMO, NOWAKI and URANAMI.

30 - U. S. carrier FRANKLIN damaged by suicide plane, Leyte Area, P. I.

November

5 - Japanese heavy cruiser NACHI sunk by carrier-based aircraft, Manila Bay, P. I.

11 - Aircraft from three carrier task groups attack Japanese convoy in Ormoc Bay, P. I.; four enemy destroyers and a mine-sweeper are sunk.

12 - German battleship TIRPITZ is sunk by British aircraft in Tromso Fjord, Norway.

November (Cont'd)

25 - Aircraft from two carrier groups bomb enemy shipping and aircraft in central Luzon, P. I. Japanese suicide planes attack U. S. carriers. U. S. light carriers INDEPENDENCE, CABOT and carriers ESSEX, INTREPID and HANCOCK are damaged by suicide planes.

27 - Japanese suicide planes attack and damage 1 battleship (COLORADO) and 2 cruisers (ST. LOUIS and MONTPELIER) in Leyte Gulf, P. I.

29 - U. S. battleship MARYLAND and destroyers SAUFLEY and AULICK damaged by suicide planes, Leyte Gulf. Japanese carrier SHINANO sunk by submarine ARCHERFISH, south of Honshu, Japan.

December

18 - Typhoon east of the Philippine Islands heavily damages ships of the Third Fleet. U. S. naval vessels sunk: Destroyers HULL, MONAGHAN and SPENCE by typhoon. U. S. naval vessels damaged by typhoon: light carriers COWPENS, MONTEREY, CABOT, and SAN JACINTO, escort carriers ALTAMAHA, NEHENTA BAY, CAPE ESPERANCE and KWAJALEIN; light cruiser MIAMI; destroyers DEWEY, AYLWIN, MADDOX, BUCHANAN, DYSON, HICKOX and BENHAM; destroyer escorts MELVIN R. NAWMAN, TABBERER and WATERMAN; oiler NANTAHALA; fleet tug JICARILLA.

19 - Japanese carrier UNRYU sunk by submarine REDFISH, East China Sea.

20 - Organized resistance ends on Leyte, P. I.

1945

January

5 - Cruiser and destroyer task group (RADM A. E. Smith) bombards enemy shipping and installations on Chichi Jima and Haha Jima, Bonin Islands.

Cruiser and destroyer task force (RADM J. L. McCrea) bombards Japanese installations at Suribachi Wan, Paramushiro, Kurile Islands.

6 - Aircraft from fast carrier force (VADM McCain) commence 2-day attack on Japanese aircraft and airfield facilities in Luzon, P. I.

7 - Battleship, cruiser and destroyer force (VADM Oldendorf) and aircraft from escort carrier group open 2-day bombardment and bombing of beach areas in Lingayen Gulf.

9 - Army forces land in Lingayen Gulf area, P. I. under cover of naval gunfire and carrier-based aircraft. U. S. battleships MISSISSIPPI and COLORADO are damaged.

February

- 9-12 - U. S. submarine BATFISH sinks Japanese submarines I-41, RO-112 and RO-113, Philippine Islands area on 9, 11 and 12 February respectively.
- 19 - Marines land on Iwo Jima, supported by intensive naval gunfire and air attack.
- 21 - U. S. escort carrier BISMARCK SEA sunk by suicide plane, Iwo Jima area.
- 24 - Japanese resistance in Manila, Luzon, P. I. ceases.

March

- 16 - Iwo Jima is declared secured.
- 18 - Aircraft from fast carrier task force (VADM Mitscher) bomb airfields on Kyushu, Japan. U. S. carriers ENTERPRISE, YORKTOWN, and INTREPID are damaged.
- 19 - Aircraft from fast carrier task force bomb airfields on Kyushu and shipping at Kure and Kobe, Honshu, Japan. U. S. carriers ESSEX, FRANKLIN, and WASP are damaged.
- 21 - Japanese aircraft make first known operational use of piloted bombs in unsuccessful attack against ADM Mitscher's fast carrier task force.

April

- 1 - Marines and Army forces land on Okinawa under cover of heavy naval gunfire and air attack. U. S. battleship WEST VIRGINIA is damaged.
- 6 - First heavy attack is made by Japanese suicide planes on U. S. ships at Okinawa; similar attacks persist throughout the Okinawa campaign.
- 7 - Aircraft of fast carrier task force (VADM Mitscher) attack Japanese naval force moving through East China Sea toward Okinawa; the enemy battleship YAMATO, 1 cruiser and 4 destroyers are sunk.
- 12 - President Franklin D. Roosevelt dies; Vice President Harry S. Truman succeeds to Presidency.

April

- 14 - U. S. battleship NEW YORK damaged by suicide plane, Okinawa area.
- 16 - U. S. carrier INTREPID and battleship MISSOURI are damaged by suicide planes, Okinawa area.
- 23 - PB4Y's of Patrol Bombing Squadron 109 launched two BAT missiles against enemy shipping in Balikpapan Harbor, Borneo, in the first combat employment of the only automatic homing missile to be used in World War II.
- 30 - Grand Admiral Karl Doenitz proclaims himself head of the German state by Hitler's appointment.

May

- 4 - Japanese aircraft stage heavy attack on Yontan airfield, Okinawa, and U. S. naval vessels supporting Okinawa operation. Coordinated with the air strike, a minor Japanese counter-landing is attempted and repulsed. U. S. escort carrier SANGAMON is damaged by suicide plane.
- 7 - Germany surrenders unconditionally to the Western Allies and Russia at Reims, France.
- 8 - V-E Day - The President proclaimed end of the war in Europe.
- 9 - The U-249, first German submarine to surrender after the cease fire in Europe, raised the black surrender flag to a PB4Y near the Scilly Islands off Lands End, England.
- 11-13 -U. S. carriers BUNKER HILL and ENTERPRISE and battleship NEW MEXICO damaged by suicide planes.
- 24 - Aircraft from fast carrier task force (VADM Mitscher) attack airfields in southern Kyushu, Japan. Japanese aircraft make concentrated attack on U. S. positions and ships at Okinawa; strikes continue on 25 May.

June

- 5 - Typhoon in the Okinawa area heavily damages U. S. naval vessels (4 battleships, 4 carriers, 3 escort carriers, 7 cruisers, 14 destroyers and 2 oilers). U. S. battleship MISSISSIPPI and heavy cruiser LOUISVILLE damaged.
- 21 - Okinawa is declared secured 82 days after landing.

July

- 2 - Submarine BARB bombards enemy installations at Kaihyo Island off the east coast of Karafuto; this is the first successful use of rockets against shore positions by a U. S. submarine.
- 5 - General of the Army, Douglas MacArthur, announces the liberation of the Philippine Islands.
- 13 - Italy declares war on Japan.
- 14 - Aircraft from fast carrier task force (VADM McCain) bomb shipping, rail facilities and ground installations in northern Honshu and Hokkaide, Japan; attack is repeated on 15 July. Battleships, cruisers and destroyers (RADM Shafroth) bombard the coastal city of Kamaishi, Honshu, Japan; this is the first naval gunfire bombardment of the Japanese homeland.
- 16 - First atomic bomb test is held at Alamogordo, New Mexico.
- 18 - Aircraft from fast carrier task forces of the Third Fleet strike Yokosuka Naval Base and airfields in the Tokyo area, Japan. Cruisers and destroyers bombard shore installations at Honshu, Japan. Carrier-based aircraft bomb Wake Island.
- 24 - Aircraft from ADM Halsey's Third Fleet launch 2-day attack on the Inland Sea area, Japan, striking Kure Naval Base and airfields at Nagoya, Osaka, and Miho. Japanese naval vessels sunk include three battleships and three lesser ships.

July (Cont'd)

- 26 - Potsdam Declaration calling for unconditional surrender is delivered to Japan.
- 28 - Aircraft from Third Fleet strike Inland Sea between Nagoya and Northern Kyushu; Kure Naval Base is the principal target. Japanese vessels sunk include carrier AMAGI; heavy cruisers TONE and IZUMO; and three lesser vessels including one submarine.
- 30 - Aircraft from the Third Fleet bomb airfields and industrial targets in central Honshu, Japan. U. S. heavy cruiser INDIANAPOLIS is sunk.

August

- 6 - Atomic bomb is dropped on Hiroshima, Honshu, Japan.
- 9 - Atomic bomb is dropped on Nagasaki, Kyushu, Japan.
- Russia declares war on Japan. Aircraft from Third Fleet attack airfields and shipping in northern Honshu and Hokkaido, Japan. Battleships and cruisers bombard industrial targets at Kamaishi.
- Battleship, cruiser, and destroyers bombard Wake Island.
- 10 - Russian forces enter Korea.
- 13 - Aircraft from fast carrier task force (VADM McCain) bomb targets in the Tokyo area, Japan.
- 14 - Japan accepts the provision of the Potsdam Declaration and agrees to surrender. General MacArthur is named Supreme Allied Commander to receive the Japanese capitulation and conduct the occupation of Japan.
- 15 - Before the announcement of the end of hostilities is received, aircraft from fast carrier task force raid airfields in the Tokyo area; heavy airborne opposition is encountered.
- 17 - Gen. Prince Higashikuni becomes Prime Minister of Japan and forms a new cabinet.
- 22 - Mili Atoll, Marshall Island, surrenders; this is the first enemy garrison to capitulate in the Pacific Ocean Area..
- 30 - Landings by the occupation forces begin in the Tokyo Bay area under cover of guns of the Third Fleet plus Naval and Army aircraft.

September

- 2 - Japanese surrender documents are signed on board the battleship MISSOURI at anchor in Tokyo Bay, Japan. General MacArthur signs for the Allied Powers; Fleet Admiral Nimitz signs for the U. S. September 3 - December 31, 1945. The period between the signing of the capitulation documents on board the MISSOURI and the end of the year 1945 witnessed the surrender of Japanese garrisons on the Asiatic mainland, and on by-passed islands scattered throughout the western Pacific.

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